

Name of Grant Program: Early College FY21 Implementation Grant
Applicant: Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School 0817

Fund Code: 462

PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

Early College Implementation Grant Purpose

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is making this competitive grant opportunity available to either Early College programs approved for Designation in spring/summer 2020, or programs who have completed at least Part A of the Designation application in 2019-2020 and are actively developing their Early College program in adherence with the [Designation Criteria](#) provided by the Early College Joint Committee. All Designated Early College partnerships are predicated on the five guiding principles: Equitable Access, Guided Academic Pathways, Enhanced Student Support, Connections to Careers, and Effective Partnerships. the college-ready criteria, and truly envision themselves as college students. Since it is increasingly necessary to participate in postsecondary education to contribute to a 21st century economy, Early College is critical to engaging and supporting more students who may not have seen postsecondary education as a component of their future.

Early College Program Support Grant Timeline

The Executive Office of Education, Department of Higher Education, and Department of Elementary Education invite Early College programs who were designated in spring/summer of 2020 to submit for this grant. The Departments also invite Early College programs who applied for, but did not yet receive Designation in 2019-2020, and who demonstrate a commitment to the continued development of their Early College programs to adhere to the Designation Criteria, to apply for this grant. This grant RFP will be posted in late spring of 2020 and approved programs would receive funding after the approval and dissemination of the state budget but not before July 1 2020.

The application for a Massachusetts Early College Program Implementation Grant is due no later than 5pm on May 29, 2020.

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PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

- I. ***Fiscal Sponsor:*** Early College partners may determine which partner will be the fiscal sponsor. However, both partners are expected to work together to complete the grant application and both are expected to sign off on the budget.

Fiscal Sponsor	Name: Sandra Goldstein		
	Title: Director of Guidance		
Fiscal Sponsor Contact	Preferred Phone Number: 978-697-7066		
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	City Hathorne	State MA	Zip Code 01937

II. Overview of Early College Competitive Grant Application

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is committed to ensuring that all of its students complete high school ready for college and career, and that they have well-designed postsecondary and career plans to enable them to become active citizens able to earn a family-sustaining wage. Its structures for student pathways to college and career, Early College programs and Innovation Pathway programs, have been designed to support these outcomes. These pathways provide a rigorous program of study that offers contextualized learning and a student-directed college and career planning process.

The Early College Joint Committee, created in 2017 to support the development of Early College programs, approved five Guiding Principles to guide program development. All five of these principles, but particularly Equitable Access, are necessary in order to impact students in these programs. Designated programs should prioritize students underrepresented in education enrollment and completion. Programs are encouraged to make real, intentional, and thoughtful efforts to aggressively recruit students who may be the first in their family to go to college, students of color, students who may be English language learners, students with disabilities, low-income students, or students who may otherwise not yet possess a perception that they may be a college going student.

PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

To facilitate this, programs should be structured to eliminate barriers to student participation. Design should therefore include, but not be limited to, tuition-free participation, open enrollment without regard to prior academic performance, student supports to promote success, scalability, multiple entry points for students, and student supports to prepare students for entry into the program. In order to support the development, growth, and scalability of Early College Programs, the Commonwealth is providing a competitive funding opportunity for programs who have received designation status in 2018 and have expended initial implementation funds. This funding would be used to increase equitable access and recruitment to Early College, as well as to continue to build scale and support structures under each of the five Guiding Principles so that Early College students are well informed and well supported as they pursue a minimum of twelve college credits.

- **Use of funds:** Successful applicants will specifically demonstrate in their responses below, as well as through their Designation application, how these funds from the state will support the applicants to build scale and/or expand capacity of either their Designated Early College program or program in pursuit of Designation. Applicants should signify how their EC pathway adheres to the five Guiding Principles of the designation criteria, with emphasis on Equitable Access.
- **Evaluation:** Applicants agree to participate in an evaluation process for the life of the grant, including supplying required data about students enrolled in the pathway and information about their ongoing oversight of the pathway.

Generally, applications for competitive funding will be scored based on the quality of the applicants' plans for the use of the requested funds to promote and support the five Guiding Principles, particularly Equitable Access.

Please Note: This funding source represents an implementation stream of available dollars for the development of Early College programs. The Departments will continue to inform existing Early College programs and potential applicants of future funding sources, including those appropriated by the legislature and those available through private sources. Please also note that the Department of Higher Education Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Program FY19 RFP prioritizes the use of dual enrollment funds as part of the development of an Early College program.

III. Application for Competitive Funding

Question 1: The Massachusetts Designated Early College program design is predicated on five Guiding Principles and their associated Designation Criteria. Using specific references to your submitted Designation applications and supplemental materials, please provide a narrative (500 word minimum) of how you plan to use these funds to meet the Designation Criteria under the

PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

five Guiding Principles. Please note that Guiding Principle 1, Equitable Access, is considered both the highest priority and is often the most difficult to achieve. Therefore, we ask that you consider it thoughtfully in this narrative. In your response, please address plans related to implementation of the following:

1. Equitable Access

- a. Including, but not limited to: recruitment, enrollment, and building scale

Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School (ENSATS) and North Shore Community College (NSCC) are committed to include all students, including underserved students who are first generation college students, English language learners, economically disadvantaged, and/or have specialized learning differences in an early college experience. Each school has strong programs to support students, including underserved students, to help them meet with academic and social success. ENSATS will be principally responsible for recruiting students and will follow the successful model implemented in the spring of 2020 to include a strong cross-section of ENSATS students. During the course selection process, all rising sophomores were introduced to the elective, Understanding Higher Education and Career Pathways, which will be a hybrid model course offered for sophomores during the 2020-2021 school year. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of school, ENSATS counselors were not able to meet with students in person to discuss this course option, but information was provided by the freshmen counselor through videos, Google meets, and individually by appointment. In the future, counselors will meet with all students to fully detail the advantages and challenges of participating in the program, making it clear that supports will be in place will help them meet with success. They will work specifically with underserved students, individually and in small groups, to reassure them that they can be successful and would greatly benefit from participation. Upon completion of the course selection process many more students than what could be accommodated in year one indicated an interest in participating in the course, which was very encouraging. A meeting will be scheduled each spring for interested students/parents/guardians, with representatives from both schools, to fully explain the course, the advantages of participating, the supports that will be put in place to help ensure success, and to answer all questions. In the spring of 2020, ENSTATS and NSCC held this meeting via Zoom with families receiving the Power-Point presentation beforehand and it was very successful. Students are then provided with the opportunity to make a final decision regarding participation in the course and for the 2020-2021 school year both sections of the course are full with a cross-section of the ENSATS student population.

The full enrollment of the initial course in the early college program is an encouraging sign that there is interest among the student population and their families in participating in this type of program. The strong supports, described in question 3, have been developed to allow students with the opportunities needed to meet with success and have a positive first college course experience. The progress of students will be closely monitored throughout the course and any necessary support adjustments will be made to meet student needs. The course has been designed so that it does not interfere with the student's career and technical education (CTE)

PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

program and experience. The plan is to have students participate for the nine academic educational cycles during first semester (cycles = five days in academics; five days in CTE). They will spend four days a week at ENSATS and one day a week at NSCC. In the first cycle, students will spend a half-day, which will include lunch, at NSCC for greater immersion at the school (fall 2020 schedule dependent upon school openings due to COVID-19). It is anticipated that student success in this initial course will spur additional interest in student participation in subsequent years and the addition of sections will be explored.

ENSATS and NSCC currently have articulation agreements with several CTE programs that allow students to earn college credit through their high school courses. These programs include health assisting, companion animal, veterinary science, landscaping and turf management, arboriculture, information technology services, graphic communications, and design and visual communication. The schools are in the process of reviewing other programs to determine if additional agreements can be developed. The schools are also planning to expand the program to include Composition 101 and a mathematics course for juniors and a Composition 102, science and mathematics course for seniors. More than one science and mathematics course may be provided to best meet the college course requirements for the CTE program in which the student is participating. Students who participate in the Understanding Higher Education and Career Pathways course and each of the courses offered to juniors and seniors would leave ENSATS with a minimum of fifteen college credits. Credits students earn based upon their career pathway will increase the number of credits students can apply to their degree from NSCC. Students can also participate in the advanced placement program in English language and literature, English composition, biology, physics, US history and calculus A/B at ENSATS to earn college credits with a qualifying score on the AP exam for the courses in which they participate.

Students will have several options for participation in the early college experience. The first on-ramp will be for sophomores who will have the opportunity to take the Understanding Higher Education and Career Pathways course. This will give them a sound overview of what to expect from a college course experience. The goal is to scale up this program in subsequent years so more students will be able to participate. This course is not a pre-requisite for participating in any other courses offered as a part of this partnership. Students will have the opportunity to opt into the early college pathway in their junior year by committing to take a minimum of 12-credits during their junior and seniors years. Composition 101 and/or mathematics in their junior year and Composition 102, science, and/or mathematics will be offered for seniors. Therefore, students have the opportunity to graduate with a minimum of twelve college academic course credits from NSCC depending upon which courses if any they choose to pursue.

This early college partnership will provide students from the North Shore and Cape Ann with the opportunity to gain significant credit toward a degree from NSCC without incurring any expense. The program will also not inhibit students from having a full high school experience, as they will still be able to participate in all extra-curricular activities and maintain full participation in their CTE program and cooperative education experience while still experiencing the college campus and seeing all it has to offer. The utilization spending one day per week of each course on the

PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

NSCC campus and the cohort model in the junior and senior years will help to establish a college going culture as students will discuss the benefits of attending with their teachers and friends and know that there will be familiar faces on the NSCC campus which provides a level of comfort.

2. Guided Academic Pathways

- a. Including, but not limited to: student course sequencing, curricular alignment, and preparatory Early College course taking

ENSATS and NSCC have been collaborating for several years to offer a variety of opportunities for students to provide them with exposure to what is available at the college. In an effort to expand upon this, there has been a concerted effort to create an early college opportunity for students. It was determined to best help students understand the rigors of college courses, course expectations, and the connection college has to their career pathway an initial course, Understanding Higher Education and Career Pathways, would be offered as a preparatory Early College course elective for sophomore students. This course aligns with NSCC's Understanding Higher Education course and will provide an introduction to higher education, including the different purposes, functions, and structures of postsecondary institutions. Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of degree and career pathways available across institutional types as well as familiarity with the social and emotional factors that influence student persistence and completion across educational settings. A variety of contemporary issues in higher education will be explored, with particular emphasis on the ways in which student experiences intersect with these issues. Topics include but are not limited to: academic discourse, social-emotional learning, educational planning, financial planning, college placement options, prerequisites/co-requisites, and teaching and learning modalities. While this course focuses on higher education specifically, course topics will have application to educational settings and successful learning more broadly.

The goal is to continue with the early college experience by offering courses to juniors and seniors. Junior students will have the opportunity to take NSCC's Composition 101 and/or a mathematics course that best aligns with their CTE program. Seniors will be eligible to participate in a mathematics and/or science course that aligns with their CTE program. This will allow students to have the correct courses for the career pathway program they choose at NSCC. Professional development with faculty from each of the schools has already taken place to begin to shape this program. Teachers have met together in large and small groups to learn about the goals of early college and to discuss course expectations, academic rigor, and assessments. Further professional development will take place as the program moves forward to solidify these courses and to develop the best instructional model, more than likely similar to the Understanding Higher Education and Career Pathways model, to fully implement a successful program that will provide students with college credits while still in high school.

These guided academic pathways will allow students to earn up to twelve college credits by participating in and successfully completing these courses. Students also have the opportunity to gain additional college credits through AP courses offered at ENSATS in English language and

PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

literature, English composition, biology, physics, US history, and calculus A/B with successful completion of the AP exam. These offerings position students well in continuing to pursue their college degree in less time and with a substantial savings by completing these academic credits while still in high school.

3. Enhanced Student Supports

- a. Including, but not limited to: tutoring, advising, and wraparound services

The program will be offered utilizing a hybrid model of instruction that allows synchronous virtual student/instructor contact. It is a blended course that incorporates both face-to-face (F2F) meetings at ENSATS and NSCC and online learning through Schoology/Blackboard with readings, videos, lectures, discussion boards, written responses, assignments, and quizzes. This model will allow students with the opportunity to participate in a method of instruction that is commonly being used in colleges today so they have experiences that will enhance their ability to be successful in post-secondary educational pursuits and will allow them to see that they are capable of successfully engaging in college courses.

This is a NSCC course that will be taught by an NSCC instructor-of-record in collaboration with ENSATS faculty. In order to help students best understand this model and meet with success, ENSATS has scheduled one teacher to be in the classroom both at ENSATS and NSCC to provide instructional face-to-face support. This individual will guide students in navigating the online platform and will clarify any questions or concerns they have and provide guidance. The ENSATS teacher will communicate directly with the NSCC faculty member teaching the course to discuss methodologies and assignments that work well and to share any concerns and/or student confusion that may arise. This will allow for course adjustments to be made as determined necessary throughout the semester so that student-learning needs are met.

Students will also have full access to all of the guidance, special education and ESL services provided at ENSATS to support them in meeting with success. All support teachers working with students in the course will be kept abreast of the course expectations and requirements so these teachers can provide any tutoring, advising or support students need. The ENSATS guidance counselors will periodically check with students in their caseload enrolled in the course to quickly identify any issues/concerns students may be experiencing and provide counseling and support. The support teachers and counselors will communicate with the ENSATS Understanding Higher Education and Career Pathways teacher to successfully deal with any issues/concerns.

Students will also have access to all of the NSCC's support services. They will be informed of the services available to them and will have the opportunity to visit the support services areas the first day they spend on the NSCC campus. The individuals in these centers will be informed of the program so they are prepared to assist the students. All ENSATS support faculty and counselors will reach out to their counter parts at the college (and vice versa) if concerns arise that they need assistance with in helping a student navigate the program successfully.

PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

4. Connections to Career

- a. Including, but not limited to: career exploration and counseling, career immersion activities, and incorporation of an online tool for use in college and career counseling that is recognized by the DESE in supporting the MyCAP process

As a career and technical education high school, it has been paramount in the discussions and planning of this early college partnership that the CTE pathways students have chosen to participate in at ENSATS are fully supported. To this end, the initial course, Understanding Higher Education and Career Pathways, has been developed to allow students to gain a comprehensive understanding of degree and career pathways available across institutional types. This will allow students to understand how pursuing a post-secondary degree will enhance their career opportunities within their chosen CTE pathway, encouraging them to consider this as a viable option upon high school graduation.

In addition to the academic credits students will be able to obtain through this program, several articulation agreements have been developed between ENSATS and NSCC to provide students with the opportunity to receive college credit for CTE courses taken at ENSATS. The schools currently have articulation agreements with the following CTE programs: health assisting, companion animal, veterinary science, landscaping and turf management, arboriculture, information technology services, graphic communications, and design and visual communication. The schools are in the process of reviewing programs to determine if additional agreements can be developed in these programs and in additional programs that would lead students into a certificate or degree program at NSCC.

The model has been developed to provide students with the opportunity to have a complete high school experience while participating. The hybrid model with the support ENSATS teacher in the classroom for four days per academic cycle and at NSCC one day per academic cycle allows students to have time and experiences on the college campus while allowing them to continue to fully participate in their career and technical education program, including cooperative education.

All ENSATS students currently and will continue to use Naviance as their online tool for college and career counseling/planning. Components of the Signal for Success program are also used in guiding students. There is a designated freshmen counselor who works with all students in making decisions and choices regarding their career pathway. Information about all CTE programs begins at freshmen orientation so students have a picture of all that is offered at ENSATS. All freshmen participate in the Career Discovery and Exploratory Program. This program is designed to enhance the students' experience during his/her first year. Such an experience peaks the students' awareness of the vast career and technical learning opportunities offered at ENSATS and beyond. The Career Discovery provides students with an opportunity to be intellectually curious as they learn through exposure to all of the twenty-four (24) career and

PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

technical program fields of study. During the Exploratory Program, students participate in eight (8) career technical programs for one cycle each to acquire a deeper understanding of the curriculum available to them as students and learn about the career pathways available to them as life-long learners after graduating from ENSATS. Students are fully engaged as active participants in their Exploratory learning experiences to better inform their CTE program placement decisions. Students meet with the freshmen guidance counselor periodically throughout this process so they can make informed decisions regarding the programs they want to participate in during the Exploratory program and again in making their final decisions regarding which career area they want to pursue during the sophomore through senior years.

Each student is assigned a guidance counselor that works with them from sophomore through senior year so the counselor and student get to know each other well and can work together to develop short and long-term career goals. The CTE teachers also work with students throughout their high school careers so they know them well and can guide them in making post-secondary career choices that support and enhance their knowledge and skills. The Cooperative Education Coordinator also works with students to place and support them in work opportunities so they have workplace experience before graduation. All of these individuals provide students with information regarding why participating in a post-secondary educational program can enhance their opportunities in the workplace, which lead to a higher earning capacity.

Therefore, students are fully supported by both ENSATS and NSCC in career exploration and in career decision-making and this program will enhance the efforts made by both institutions to prepare students for post-secondary educational and career opportunities.

5. Effective Partnerships

- a. Including, but not limited to: staffing, scheduling, and coordination between all partners

ENSATS and NSCC have a well-established partnership. The schools have been working together for years in developing articulation agreements and exploring best ways to provide students with early college opportunities. Gaining an early college designation would solidify this partnership and provide support that will help this partnership grow and flourish. The schools are adjacent to each other creating familiarity and easy access for ENSATS students. NSCC is the primary higher educational institution on the North Shore that students look to for beginning their post-secondary educational experience. They have extensive experience in working with students with a specific career pathway and in working with underserved student populations. Therefore, this partnership has the potential to provide many students who never thought post-secondary education was an option for them find that they are capable and competent in moving forward and it will reduce post-secondary education time and debt, key factors to preventing students from enrolling.

Question 2: Please confirm the necessary assurance related to your Early College program.

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PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

For Designated Programs: Please assure that your Early College program will use these funds to develop programming that meets the expectations of the Designation Criteria, as outlined in your approved application.

We attest that this is true

For Programs Working Towards Designation: Please assure that these funds will be used to support the development of programming that meets the expectations of the Designation Criteria, as outlined in your application and supplemental materials. Please assure that your program will work with the Massachusetts Designated Early College Technical Assistance provider in the FY21 year in order to progress towards Designation.

We attest that this is true